

JAN 22 2019

SENATE RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES, IN CONSULTATION
WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY, TO WORK WITH THE
FAMILY REUNIFICATION WORKING GROUP AND OTHER COMMUNITY
STAKEHOLDERS TO DEVELOP A PLAN TO ESTABLISH VISITATION
CENTERS AT ALL STATE CORRECTIONAL FACILITIES AND JAILS.

1 WHEREAS, as states grapple with the alarming statistics
2 regarding children of incarcerated parents nationwide, child
3 welfare servers and public safety stakeholders are acknowledging
4 the adverse childhood experiences and trauma faced by children
5 of incarcerated parents; and
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7 WHEREAS, child welfare servers and public safety
8 stakeholders are declaring that they will fulfill their duty to
9 ensure the rights and wellbeing of all children, including the
10 children of incarcerated parents; and
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12 WHEREAS, parental incarceration is a strong risk factor for
13 many adverse outcomes for children, including antisocial and
14 violent behavior, mental health problems, failure to graduate
15 from school, and unemployment; and
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17 WHEREAS, parental incarceration is now recognized as an
18 "adverse childhood experience"; it is distinguished from other
19 adverse childhood experiences by the unique combination of
20 trauma, shame, and stigma; and
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22 WHEREAS, the prison environment can be frightening and
23 traumatizing for children, both in the attitudes and behaviors
24 of prison staff as well as the physical setting of approved
25 visitation sites; and
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27 WHEREAS, visits can include long waits, body frisks, rude
28 treatment, and exposure to crowded visiting rooms with no
29 activities for children; and
30



S.R. NO. 1

1 WHEREAS, such conditions do not encourage frequent visits
2 between incarcerated parents and their children, despite
3 findings from studies suggesting the maintenance of family ties
4 and parent-child relationships is linked to post-release
5 success, lower rates of recidivism, and fewer parole violations;
6 and
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8 WHEREAS, studies suggest that the alarming rates of
9 intergenerational incarceration may be attributed to the lack of
10 communication and maintenance of child-incarcerated parent
11 relationships; and
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13 WHEREAS, caring for children who are experiencing the
14 stigma and blame associated with parental incarceration is
15 particularly difficult for caregivers and may be emotionally and
16 physically taxing; and
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18 WHEREAS, Hawai'i's correctional system can benefit from the
19 establishment of visitation centers at all local correctional
20 prisons and jails with the hope to strengthen, rebuild, and
21 reunify children with their incarcerated parents and ensure the
22 welfare and wellbeing of children of incarcerated parents; and
23

24 WHEREAS, in January 2014, the legislative Keiki Caucus
25 established a working group to explore the issues surrounding
26 children and families impacted by incarceration, called the
27 Family Reunification Working Group, which consisted of
28 representatives from Blueprint for Change, Hawai'i Prisoner
29 Resource Center, dba Holomua Center, the Office of Hawaiian
30 Affairs, ALU LIKE, Inc., Queen Lili'uokalani Children's Center,
31 Keiki O Ka Aina Learning Centers, Family Programs Hawai'i, Adult
32 Friends for Youth, Community Alliance on Prisons, TJ Mahoney,
33 Chaminade University's Native Hawaiian Program, and Makana O Ke
34 Akua Clean and Sober Living, and included parents of children
35 who have been affected by incarceration; now, therefore,
36

37 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Thirtieth Legislature
38 of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2019, that during the
39 interim following the Regular Session of 2019, the Department of
40 Human Services, in consultation with the Department of Public
41 Safety, is requested to work with the Keiki Caucus's Family
42 Reunification Working Group and other community stakeholders to



S.R. NO. 1

1 develop a plan to establish children-friendly and family-
2 friendly visitation centers at all State correctional prisons
3 and jails to ensure the wellbeing of children of incarcerated
4 parents and their families; and

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6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Human
7 Services submit a report on the status of visitation centers,
8 including any findings, recommendations, and proposed
9 legislation, to the Legislature no later than twenty days prior
10 to the convening of the Regular Sessions of 2020 and 2021; and

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12 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
13 Resolution be transmitted to the Director of Human Services,
14 Director of Public Safety, and Chairperson of the Keiki Caucus's
15 Family Reunification Working Group.

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18 OFFERED BY:

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